



THE COMMUNICATOR

Grant County Employee Newsletter

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Guest Columnist—Jo-Ann Millhouse, Corporation Counsel

The Office of the Grant County Corporation Counsel is staffed by Jo-Ann Millhouse who serves as the Grant County Corporation Counsel and Jackie Stivarius who serves as the secretary. Jo-Ann has been the Corporation Counsel since February of 1994 and has been a licensed attorney since 1984. Jo-Ann is a graduate of John Marshall Law School and the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. Jackie Stivarius has been with the Corporation Counsel's office since July of 2008.

The Office of the Corporation Counsel handles a diverse number of cases for Grant County. The office prosecutes mental commitments of people in Grant County who are dangerous and

have mental illnesses, drug addictions, or alcohol addictions. In 2008 the Office of the Corporation Counsel had 197 mental/drug/alcoholic emergency detentions filed. Another duty of the Corporation Counsel is to serve as a prosecutor for the State of Wisconsin in child support cases in Grant County. In 2008, the County collected \$4,891,838.49 in child support and other child support related fees. Handling child support cases takes up approximately 50% of the Corporation Counsel's time.

Other duties of the Corporation Counsel include drafting and reviewing contracts, agreements, leases, and other documents; handling lawsuits filed against the

county and county departments and employees; filing lawsuits on behalf of Grant County and Grant County departments; assisting in settling personnel issues; and giving legal advice to county employees, county departments, county committee members, and county board members. The Corporation Counsel also assists in purchasing real estate and selling real estate for the county. Jo-Ann has also been involved in doing numerous investigations for Grant County. She also gets involved with placing people under guardianships and protective placements and taking action against people who owe Grant County money through actions in Bankruptcy Court and Circuit Court.

Fitness Grant

The N.E.W. (Nutrition, Exercise, Wellness) Coalition of Grant County has received a grant to combat obesity and poor eating habits. Our emphasis is on increasing the consumption of fruits and vegetables and increasing physical activity. At this point our grant is in a planning stage with limited funding until June of 2010. In June of 2010 we will write and hopefully receive the implementa-

tion grant which will allow us to actually implement ideas from our strategic plan within the county.

With one part of our grant emphasizing physical activity, we would like to ask if county employees would be interested in attending an after work, fit-



ness activity class. The details for such a class have not yet been worked out. However, we are potentially considering a program held in Lancaster shortly after work two days a week (Monday/Wednesday?). There will likely be a fee to attend class. As the weather gets nicer some outdoor activities may be included. Please let us know if you are interested by contacting Carol Thole at 723-1624 or cthole@co.grant.wi.gov. If there is enough interest we will explore this option further.

Anyone wishing to have a specific subject discussed in a future newsletter may contact Joyce Roling at 723-2045.

The Dangers of Third Hand Smoke

Many of us are aware of the hazards of second hand smoke, but have you heard about third hand smoke? Third hand smoke is the remains of harmful toxins and chemicals that are deposited on the skin, clothes and hair of smokers after smoking a cigarette. Smoking in confined spaces such as vehicles can intensify this process and create strong smoke odors as well.

Health care facilities and providers are beginning to recognize the potential dangers associated with these types of exposures and are beginning to take action. The Grant Regional Health Center now includes within their Tobacco-Free Campus policy a statement relating to this dangerous residue. Employees working with patients are not allowed to "have an odor of smoke or tobacco products on their clothing, hair or breath while on the premises" for the health and safety of all their patients.

Smokers should be aware of the increased risk of infection, the possibility of triggering asthma attacks, and the potential exposure to harmful chemicals that can be passed on as a result of third hand smoke. Please consider this when working or visiting with your co-workers, the public, clients, and loved ones.

If you are concerned and are wanting to quit, please contact Carol Thole at 723-1624 or at cthole@co.grant.wi.gov for free and valuable information.



Human Resource Updates and Reminders

Dawn Mergen, Personnel Specialist

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FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) Changes

The Federal FMLA law requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
- To care for employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employees' job

The Federal FMLA law was recently revised to include the following:

- Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. (*Exigencies include short-notice deployment activities, military events and related activities, childcare and school activities, financial and legal arrangements, counseling activities, rest and recuperation activities, and post-deployment activities.*)
- FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period.

FMLA training is provided by the Personnel Office on a quarterly basis. The next training will be on June 18th at 9:45 a.m. in the County Board Room. Please contact me at 723-2540 if you are able to attend. As always, you may contact our office with any FMLA questions you may have.

Adding Dependents to Health and Dental Insurance

You may add dependents to your health and dental insurance policy up to 30 days after their other coverage ends due to a "qualifying event". Coverage is retroactive so there isn't a break in coverage between policies. To add a dependent you must complete an enrollment form and submit it to the Personnel office before the 30 day period expires.

2009 Office Co-pay Reimbursement requests are due April 10th

The Personnel Office will be accepting reimbursement request forms on the following dates for 2009: April 10th, July 10th, October 10th, and January 15th (of 2010). Forms must be completed, signed, and appropriate documentation must be attached.

Employees are responsible for completing the request form. We will check the forms and contact the employee if we come up with a different figure. If you turn in a signed blank or partially completed request form, you will not be contacted to verify the amount of reimbursement before payment is made.

You will not get your receipts back, so you may want to keep a copy of your documentation for future reference. The employee rate of .05 per copy will be applied for requests for us to make copies for you.

A reimbursement form and policy are available from the Personnel Office or on the internet at www.co.grant.wi.gov by clicking on the "Departments" link, then "Personnel Department", then Office Visit Co-Pay Reimbursement "Policy and Form".

Federal Economic Stimulus Package Modifies Cost of Insurance Continuation

Federal law requires that most group health plans give employees and their families the opportunity to continue their health insurance coverage when there is a "qualifying event" that would result in the loss of coverage. (Examples: End of employment, divorce, and end of full-time student status.) Coverage generally may be continued for up to a total of 18 months. This law is called the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA).

COBRA participants are responsible for the full monthly insurance premium. However, the new federal economic stimulus package may reduce the cost of coverage for a limited period of time when the loss of coverage was *involuntary*. This change is retroactive to September 1, 2008. Employers have until the middle of April to send notification to those past employees and any dependents that lost coverage since September 1st. The County's Personnel Department will be taking care of this notification requirement.

S	E	E	D	S	P	R	O	U	T	S
Z	O	R	S	R	E	T	A	W	T	T
U	E	T	T	E	A	E	O	O	R	N
C	W	P	O	B	M	K	R	L	H	A
C	O	O	O	M	H	R	E	S	C	L
H	L	T	R	U	A	T	I	H	A	P
I	A	A	I	C	T	T	S	O	N	S
N	T	T	H	U	E	N	O	V	I	P
I	L	O	C	C	O	R	B	E	P	A
W	E	E	D	I	N	G	A	L	S	D
N	S	S	N	R	O	C	S	C	W	E
E	O	O	W	C	B	I	R	D	S	N

Gardening Word Find

Birds	Potatoes	Spinach
Broccoli	Plants	Sprouts
Carrots	Rake	Tomatoes
Corn	Roots	Water
Cucumbers	Scarecrow	Weeding
Hoe	Seeds	Zucchini
Lettuce	Shovel	
Onions	Spade	



Service Anniversaries ***(5 year increments)***

Wilbur Austin, 35 years on May 1st

Mary Rasmussen, 30 years on April 23rd

Mark Lucey, 25 years on April 2nd

Gary Scott, 20 years on April 25th

John Anderson, 20 years on May 16th

Brenda Cullen, 20 years on June 2nd

Michael Kratochvill, 20 years on June 2nd

Rose Key, 20 years on June 19th

Mary Lou Place, 20 years on June 22nd

Jamie Scholl, 15 years on June 13th

Threasa Herbers, 15 years on June 17th

Terry Hodgson, 10 years on April 12th

Eric Ellis, 10 years on May 17th

Jennifer Leeser, 10 years on June 16th

Paul Schauer, 10 years on June 22nd

Nikole Hoffman, 10 years on June 29th

Scott Pagenkopf, 5 years on April 5th

Keith Edge, 5 years on May 3rd

***Congratulations on reaching
these milestones!
Thank you***

